

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00

XMB-07 OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 SCEM-02

INT-08 SCI-06 DRC-01 /192 W
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R 211755Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WAHSDC 9465

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 7445

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, BE

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC MINISTER'S VIEWS ON ENERGY ACTION
GROUP

1. SUMMARY: DURING DISCUSSION OF SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL
FOR AN ENERGY ACTION GROUP, ECONOMICS MINISTER CLAES
TOLD ME THAT HE PERSONALLY, AS WELL AS, SO HE BELIEVED THE
BELGIAN GOVERNMENT, SUPPORTED SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL FOR
AN ENERGY ACTION GROUP. HE REGRETTED THAT HIS EFFORTS
TO BRING ABOUT A BELGIAN INITIATIVE FOR SUPPORT IN
COPENHAGEN HAD FAILED. HE ALSO REPORTED MESSAGE FROM
BELGIAN EMBASSY IN SAUDI ARABIA STATING THAT SAUDIS WOULD
NOT AGREE TO AN ARRANGEMENT FOR SHIPMENT OF CRUDE
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VIA ROTTERDAM TO BELGIUM. AS A CONSEQUENCE, BELGIUM
WOULD NOW HAVE TO MAKE BILATERAL EFFORTS TO SUPPLY

ITSELF AFTER THE FRENCH HAD ALREADY NEGOTIATED INDEPENDENTLY WITH THE POLES, THE SOVIETS, AND THE ARABS. CLAES PROMISED ME HE WOULD AGAIN BE IN TOUCH WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO URGE THAT BELGIUM TAKE AN INITIATIVE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY TO OBTAIN SUPPORT FOR THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE. END SUMMAY.

2. DURING A CALL ON ECONIMICS MINISTER CLAES ON DECEMBER 21, I CONCENTRATED ON SEEKING THE MINISTER'S REACTIONS TO THE SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL FOR AN ENERGY ACTION GROUP CONTAINED IN PILGRIM SOCIETY SPEECH IN LONDON. I TOLD THE MINISTER THAT THE REACTIONS OR RATHER LACK THEREOF AT THE COPENHAGEN SUMMIT WERE DISAPPOINTING AND EXPLAINED THAT COOPERATION WITHIN OECD WAS NOT WHAT THE SECRETARY HAD IN MIND.

3. MINISTER CLAES EXPRESSED AGAIN HIS FAVORABLE PERSONAL VIEW OF THE SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL WHICH HE BELIEVED WAS ALSO THE OPINION OF THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT. CLAES SAID HE FAVORED THE PROPOSAL FOR TWO REASONS. IN THE FIRST PLACE, HIS SELFISH REASON WAS THAT WHEN THE UNITED STATES ENGAGED ITSELF IN A MAJOR UNDERTAKING SUCH AS REACHING THE MOON, ETC., YOU COULD BE SURE THAT THE MATTER WOULD BE PURSUED WITH ENERGY TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. FOR THIS REASON, EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION WITH AN AMERICAN INITIATIVE WAS IN ITS OWN INTERESTS. SECONDLY, CLAES SAID THAT HE FAVORED THE PROPOSAL BECAUSE IT WAS IN THE INTEREST OF STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE.

4. CLAES WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD PRESENTED A DOCUMENTED PROPOSAL URGING BELGIAN INITIATIVE SUPPORTING THE EAG AT THE COPENHAGEN SUMMIT TO THE PRE-SUMMIT MEETING COMPOSED OF THE PRIME MINISTER, TWO VIEW PRIME MINISTERS, THE FOREIGN MINISTER, AND HIMSELF, AT THAT TIME, FOR VARIOUS REASONS, THE PROPOSAL WAS NOT ACCEPTED.

5. CLAES WENT ON TO EXPATiate ON PROBLEM, HE SAID,
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WAS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY DIFFERENCES AMONG THE REMAINING EIGHT, CITING RECENT PROBLEMS WITH REGIONAL POLICIES AND BETWEEN DUTCH AND OTHER ON ENERGY. AS A RESULT OF ALL THIS BELGIUM WAS NOW FACED WITH A SERIOUS PROBLEM SINCE THE BELGIAN EMBASSY IN SAUDI ARABIA HAD JUST SENT A MESSAGE ANNOUNCING THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD NOT AGREE TO THE OPENING OF ROTTERDAM TO TRANSIT CRUDE DESTINED BELGIUM.

6. THE SITUATION WAS MADE MORE SERIOUS BY THE REJECTION

BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OF HIS PROPOSALS SOME 4-5 WEEKS AGO THAT BELGIUM TAKE BILATERAL INITIATIVES TO SUPPLY ITSELF WITH ENERGY PRODUCTS. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD OBJECTED TO HIS PROPOSALS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THIS AS A MATTER THAT WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF BY THE COMMUNITY. NOW WITH THIS LATEST NEWS ON ROTTERDAM FOLLOWING THE FACT THAT THE FRENCH HAD INDEPENDENTLY NEGOTIATED CONTRACTS FOR COAL AND PETROLEUM WITH THE POLES, THE SOVIETS, AND THE ARABS, BELGIUM WOULD BELATEDLY BE FORCED TO UNDERTAKE ITS OWN BILATERAL EFFORTS TO SEE WHAT IT COULD DO TO PROTECT A SHRINKING MARKET ITS INTERESTS.

7. AT THE CONCLUSION OF OUR TALK THE MINISTER SAID I COULD COUNT ON HIM TO AGAIN URGE THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO REQUEST THE COMMUNITY TO RESPOND QUICKLY AND FAVORABLY TO THE SECRETARY'S SUGGESTION. STRAUZ-HUPE

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